

**Borders NHS Board****ACCESS CRITERIA FOR NHS FUNDED ASSISTED CONCEPTION TREATMENT (IVF)****Aim**

Clinically effective treatment has been available for many of the causes of infertility for many years, this paper presents the case for a change to the access criteria for NHS funded assisted conception (IVF) treatment for NHS Border couples. This new criteria impacts on all new referrals with immediate effect (existing patients would remain on the existing treatment pathway for a maximum of one year). This proposal has been supported by the Clinical Executive & the Strategy Group for submission and consideration by the NHS Borders Board.

**Background**

- NHS Borders patients IVF treatment is currently delivered by NHS Lothian. In 2010/2011 – 30 of the 35 Patients referred to this service received a single course of treatment the remaining 5 received 2 cycles. (A cycle of treatment is defined as one fresh cycle including ovulation, egg retrieval, fertilisation, implantation and appropriate diagnostic tests & pharmacological therapy)
- NHS Borders current IVF eligibility criteria are:
  - 3 fresh & unlimited frozen cycles of treatment
  - Female <41 years of age
  - Body Mass Index (BMI )<32
  - Double embryo transfer
  - Smokers & Non-smokers
  - No Children living at home
  - Neither partner previously sterilised or had vasectomy
  - Main residence within Scottish Borders region
  - Previous treatment: previous self-funded treatment or treatment funded by another body will be subtracted from the total number of cycles the couple are entitled to due to clinical evidence base related to success criteria
  - Same sex couples provision of NHS IVF to same sex couples who are eligible for treatment will change in the same way as that for heterosexual couples
- From 2009 Scottish Health boards began the process of amending their access criteria;
- In line with other Scottish Health Boards, our criteria are due to be updated based on the following national guidance.
  - Expert Group on Infertility Services in Scotland (EAGISS) report produced in 2000.

- The Scottish Government 2007 report which had the following recommendations for changes to the criteria for access in order to obtain maximum effectiveness and equity of treatment
  - The upper age limit for access to NHS funded conception treatment should be 39 years ie the woman should be before her 40<sup>th</sup> birthday at th time of treatment
  - “Reasonable timescale” in the context of waiting list management, stating that once a couple has started treatment they should not be returned back to the end of the waiting list between each cycle of treatment
- In comparison to some English Primary Care Trusts, three PCT’s have amended their service provision to one funded cycle of treatment per eligible couple and five have suspended the IVF service awaiting revised guidelines from NICE, expected early 2012.

## Assessment

In order to bring NHS Borders IVF Access Criteria in line with national guidance and NHS Lothian, NHS Fife, NHS Tayside and NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde this paper proposes to move to the new criteria. The comparison between the existing criteria and the proposed new criteria are detailed below.

Existing criteria	Proposed New criteria
3 fresh & unlimited frozen cycles of treatment	2 fresh & maximum of 3 frozen; maximum of 5 cycles of treatment
Female <41 years of age	Female <40 years of age
BMI <32	BMI <30**
Double embryo transfer	Single embryo transfer where appropriate
Smokers & Non-smokers	Non-smokers only **
No Children living at home	No Children living at home
Neither partner previously sterilised or had vasectomy	Neither partner previously sterilised or had vasectomy
Main residence within Scottish Borders region	Main residence within Scottish Borders region
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*\*\* There is clinical evidence to suggest that IVF treatment is more likely to result in a live birth in couples who are non-smokers and where the woman has a normal body mass index.*

- Access to fertility services is governed by the same principles as other services in NHS Borders, namely needs assessment, clinical effectiveness and cost effectiveness. An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed for this change to the IVF service and has been agreed by senior Clinicians & Head of Child Health & Midwifery Service ensuring that there is no detriment to NHS Borders patients
- Financial Impact: Spend in 2009/10: £138,794 and in 2010/11: £151,960. The criteria change is expected to release £34k per year.
- Appeals process: Should any couple wish to pursue a further cycle of funded treatment the current ECR process will review any such request
- The changes would be introduced with immediate effect for all new referrals with couples already on the programme remaining within the current criteria for a maximum of 1 year, ie no one will be on the old criteria by January 2013.

### Recommendation

The BOARD are asked to **ratify** the changes to the criteria and support their implementation with immediate effect.

<b>Rationale for submission to Strategy &amp; Performance Committee</b>	Amendments to access criteria will bring NHS Borders in alignment with main service provider NHS Lothian & other mainland Health Boards
<b>Policy/Strategy Implications</b>	None
<b>Consultation</b>	All BGH Consultant Gynaecologists, Head of Women & Child Health Services and BGH General Manager
<b>Consultation with Professional Committees</b>	None
<b>Risk Assessment</b>	Verbal discussion with Clinicians & no major risks identified
<b>Compliance with Board Policy requirements on Equality and Diversity</b>	Yes, Equality & Impact assessment completed
<b>Resource/Staffing Implications</b>	None

### Approved by

<b>Name</b>	<b>Designation</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Designation</b>
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